

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4892

NODIS CHEROKEE

FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: CONVERSATION WITH GAYLARD

1. GRAHAM AND I SAW GAYLARD BRIEFLY MONDAY, AUGUST 21. WE ASKED WHETHER SMITH'S PUBLIC REFERENCE TO DISCUSSIONS OVER AN AGENDA FOR AN ALL PARTIES MEETING MEANT THAT ANYTHING FURTHER WAS DESIRED OF US IN TERMS OF A DISCUSSION OF THE SUBSTANCE OF A MEETING. GAYLARD SAID HE DID NOT KNOW EXACTLY WHAT SMITH HAD IN MIND BUT DOUBTED THAT ANYTHING FURTHER WAS DESIRED OF US. HE IMAGINED THE REFERENCE WAS MORE TO THE NKOMO TALKS THAN THE ALL PARTIES MEETING.

2. WE MADE A POINT OF UNDERLINING THE IMPORTANCE OF AVOIDING FURTHER DELAY IN REACHING A DECISION ON AN ALL PARTIES MEETING. WE SAID WE FELT THERE WAS A WINDOW AVAILABLE TO US FOR SUCH A MEETING AND ONCE THAT CLOSED IT COULD BE DIFFICULT TO GET EVERYONE TOGETHER AGAIN. WE FELT THAT WE WERE GETTING NEAR THE END OF THAT PERIOD, PERHAPS ONLY ANOTHER FEW MORE WEEKS WERE AVAILABLE TO US. WE WERE UNDER HEAVY CRITICISM ABROAD OVER OUR APPARENT INABILITY TO BRING THE PARTIES TOGETHER AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT APPEARED TO BE LOSING INTEREST. IF WE MISSED NEXT WEEK IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO HOLD THE MEETING BEFORE SEPT. 11 OR 12 BECAUSE
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OF SECRETARY VANCE'S COMMITMENTS WITH THE MIDDLE EASTERN TALKS. WE ASKED GAYLARD WHETHER HE THOUGHT THERE WAS ANY POSSIBILITY OF A DECISION TUESDAY TO GO TO A MEETING NEXT WEEK. HE SAID HE THOUGHT THERE WAS PRACTICALLY NONE. WE HAD ALL AGREED, HE SAID, THAT AN ALL PARTIES MEETING SHOULD DEPEND ON SMITH'S PRELIMINARY TALKS WITH NKOMO. WE REMINDED HIM THAT AS A MATTER OF FACT WE HAD SPECIFICALLY ASKED WHETHER AN ALL PARTIES MEETING WAS

CONTINGENT ON THE PRELIMINARY MEETING WITH NKOMO AND HE HAD REPLIED THAT IT WASN'T. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE AND SMITH CONSIDER A PRIOR PRIVATE MEETING "ESSENTIAL" (THE FIRST MEETING WAS NOT PRIVATE).

3. GAYLARD NOTED THAT HE HEARD GARBA HAD GONE TO MAPUTO AND SPECULATED THAT MUGABE HAD GIVEN NKOMO SOME DIFFICULTY. THIS CAUSED GARBA TO GO TO SEE MACHEL ABOUT IT. HOWEVER, GAYLARD SAID HE HAD ALSO HEARD A REPORT THAT ZANU AND ZAPU HAD AGREED ON MILITARY AND POLITICAL INTEGRATION AND A STATEMENT FROM MUGABE THAT HE WOULD NOT NECESSARILY INSIST ON THE NUMBER ONE POSITION. THIS, GAYLARD SAID, WAS ENCOURAGING. HE THOUGHT IT PROBABLY WOULD BE USEFUL IF MUGABE WERE PRESENT AT THE NEXT MEETING WITH SMITH. GAYLARD SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN AGREED IN LUSAKA THAT THERE WOULD BE ANOTHER MEETING. HE EXPECTED THEREFORE TO HEAR FROM LUSAKA IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. SMITH WAS NOT PREPARED TO GO AHEAD WITH THE DECISION ON AN ALL PARTIES MEETING UNTIL THEN.

4. GAYLARD SAID THAT THE MATTER OF A LOCATION FOR THE CONFERENCE HAD NOT YET BEEN DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. WE REPEATED OUR REASONS FOR PREFERING LUANGWA BUT ASKED ABOUT ALTERNATIVES. THE IDEA OF ALTERNATING BETWEEN LIVINGSTONE AND VICTORIA FALLS OR LUANGWA AND BUMI HILLS WAS DISCUSSED BUT THE PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS APPEARED VIRTUALLY INSURMOUNTABLE. IF NO FRONT LINE COUNTRIES WERE TO BE CONSIDERED, AND THE PF WOULD NOT GO TO EITHER MALWAI OR KENYA, THAT LEFT US WITH MAURITIUS, CONFIDENTIAL

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AKROTIRI, ASCENSION. OF THESE, MAURITIUS WAS PROBABLY THE MOST POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE BECAUSE OF ITS NON-MILITARY OR COLONIAL CHARACTER. GAYLARD HAD NO PROBLEM WITH IT, BUT SAID THE BRITISH WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO FLY THE SALISBURY GROUP THERE.

5. COMMENT: I FIND GAYLARD'S NEW ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PF ENCOURAGING. HIS WILLINGNESS TO TAKE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE INTEGRATION OF ZANU AND ZAPU AND MUGABE'S PRESENCE AT THE NEXT MEETING IS A STEP FORWARD FROM THE POSITION HE WAS TAKING A FEW WEEKS AGO. IT AUGURS WELL FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF AT LEAST BEING ABLE TO ENTER INTO CONSTRUCTIVE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN SMITH AND THE PF.

6. HOWEVER, EVEN IF THE PF DOES NOT GET ITSELF TOGETHER, IT IS STILL NOT CLEAR WHAT SMITH THINKS HE NEEDS BEFORE HE IS WILLING TO GO FORWARD WITH THE ALL PARTIES MEETING. FURTHERMORE, EVEN WHEN HE IS, HE WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE A PROBLEM WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. CONVINCING THEM TO GO IS NOT GOING TO BE EASY, AND WORKING OUT THE DETAILS OF TIME AND LOCATION WILL NOT SPEED UP THE MATTER. GAYLARD'S ASSESSMENT OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF COMING TO A QUICK DECISION IS NOT ENCOURAGING. HE LEFT US WITH NO DOUBT

THAT HE FELT THERE WAS LITTLE CHANCE OF A MEETING IN AUGUST.
IF THERE IS NO CHANCE OF A DECISION THIS WEEK, GRAHAM AND I ARE
CONSIDERING WHETHER WE SHOULD NOT RECOMMEND LEAVING SALISBURY
FOR A LITTLE WHILE. WE FEEL THAT ONCE THE DECISION HAS BEEN
TAKEN TO GO TO A MEETING, WE SHOULD BE AROUND UNTIL IT ACTUALLY
TAKES PLACE, BUT THAT PERHAPS ABSENTING OURSELVES FOR A LITTLE
WHILE FROM SALISBURY WOULD BE A MEANS OF PUTTING FURTHER
PRESSURE ON THEM TO GET ON WITH THE DECISION. IN ANY
CASE, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD REMAIN HERE AT LEAST AS LONG AS GARBA IS
IN THE AREA TO MAKE A NEW ASSESSMENT BASED ON WHETHER A SECOND
SMITH/NKOMO MEETING HAS TAKEN PLACE AND WHAT WERE ITS RESULTS.
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